



NORTHEAST ENERGY EFFICIENCY COUNCIL

A business association of the energy efficiency industry
Connecticut Chapter

Comments of the Northeast Energy Efficiency Council- Connecticut Chapter

Energy & Technology Committee Public Hearing March 10, 2009

Good Afternoon Senator Fonfara, Representative Nardello and members of the Energy & Technology Committee. My name is Chris Halpin. I am president of Celtic Energy, Inc. I am here tonight on behalf of the Northeast Energy Efficiency Council-Connecticut Chapter.

The Northeast Energy Efficiency Council- Connecticut Chapter (NEEC-CT) is a subchapter of the Northeast Energy Efficiency Council, which is a regional coalition of businesses and people involved in the energy efficiency marketplace.

NEEC-CT would like to thank you for tackling such a complex issue as you have in **Raised Bill 6632- An Act Concerning Energy Efficiency and the Coordination of Efficiency Programs**. We appreciate the amount of time that has gone into reviewing the importance of the energy efficiency programs in Connecticut. We have seen in other states, that having a central energy administration has worked very well and has simplified many areas of the energy efficiency programs. These states have worked with the Utilities to deliver their programs. Our concern lies with the untested. Connecticut has award-winning programs. We are concerned that what makes these programs award winning may be lost if the oversight is moved.

Currently, the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund (CEEF) is administered through CL&P and UI and overseen by the Energy Conservation Management Board (ECMB). These programs are among the best programs in the country. RB 6632 proposes to replace the ECMB with a new oversight entity the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Resources Board. This new board will oversee various programs including the CEEF, the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund and the low-income energy assistance board. We are concerned that this will take focus away from current programs that are extremely successful, efficient and user friendly by creating a larger board that is focused on multiple efficiency, conservation and low-income programs.

NEEC-CT has concerns specific to the consistency of administration of these programs. This year represents the second time within the last 10 years that the CEEF has been the subject of raids to help off set budget shortfalls. Each time there has been a raid or proposed raid of energy efficiency funding we have seen a disruption of these programs resulting in work stoppages, canceled contracts and ultimately lay-offs within our industry.

During these difficult times the long-term effects of these disruptions may be multiplied and further concerns over the future administration of these programs will only

further compound this. While NEEC-CT supports any goals that expand the state's commitment to energy efficiency we argue that any disruption of the current administration of the funds will only hurt Connecticut's long-term goals and damage what is currently a strong green jobs industry based within the state.

We thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today.